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20 more sterilization campaign days planned for 2014

Between January 1 and August 31 we co-sponsored 18 days of free sterilization campaigns with the state Secretariat of Health, during which 844 dogs and cats (most of them female dogs) were sterilized in and around the city of Guanajuato. Eight veterinarians employed by the Secretariat of Health and two private veterinarians performed the surgeries.

During the remainder of the year, we plan to conduct 20 more days of free campaigns, during which we expect to sterilize 700 animals. The campaigns are scheduled for the following dates and places:

- September 15 and 17: Centro de Atención Integral de Servicios Esenciales de Salud, or CAISES (100 animals)
- September 18: Santa Teresa (30 animals)
- September 19: Club de Peñoles, near Cerro de los Leones (30 animals)
- October 20: CAISES (30 animals)
- October 21: Santa Catarina de Cuevas (50 animals)
- October 22: Cerro de los Leones (30 animals)
- October 23: CAISES (30 animals)
- October 24: Club de Peñoles (30 animals)
- November 24: Santa Teresa (30 animals)
- November 25: Calle Nogal 1, near the Telmex office
- November 26 and 27: CAISES (100 animals)

- November 28: Club de Peñoles (30 animals)
- December 2: Santa Teresa (30 animals)
- December 3 and 4: CAISES (60 animals)
- December 5: Los Cajones, Salón de Resplandor (30 animals)
- December 15: Colonia Martires 22 de abril (30 animals)
- December 16: Club de Peñoles (30 animals)

Registration will be open between 9 a.m. and 12 noon, and only adults may register pets. We advise arriving early. Dogs should be leashed, and cats should be confined in a carrier of some sort. A plastic mesh bag is ideal for this purpose.



*A plastic mesh bag is a useful way to control a cat.
This cat is already sedated*

Requirements for participating in a campaign

The animals must be at least two months old. Animals older than eight weeks should not be given any food for eight hours before arriving at the campaign site, and animals between eight and 12 weeks old should not be given any food for four hours before their arrival; but all the animals can be given water. We recommend bringing a blanket for each animal.

The sterilization process

The sterilization process, from registration to discharge of the patient, takes between one and two hours, depending upon the number of animals waiting to be sterilized. After being registered and weighed, an animal is tranquilized and then anesthetized, given an injectable antibiotic, swabbed with a disinfectant and shaved in the surgical area, and taken to a surgeon.

The surgery normally takes only a few minutes, after which the patient is placed on a clean, dry surface (on a tarp or cardboard and newspaper spread on the floor if an adult dog, or on newspaper in a plastic laundry basket if a puppy or a cat) and then covered with a blanket. Trained volunteers in the recovery unit frequently check the animal's vital signs and administer medicine to control pain after the animal wakes. They also prepare medicines to be taken home and administer an anti-parasite drug to dogs with mange if that is appropriate.



Volunteers check dogs in recovery for any signs of problems

When the animal is awake, the owner is called and given aural and written instructions for its post-operative care, along with the take-home medicines.

If the owner has any questions, he or she is encouraged to ask for clarification.



Volunteer Santos Soto discharges a patient after explaining post-operative care to its owner

Should the patient develop an infection or some other problem after arriving home, the owner is advised to report the problem immediately to a veterinarian associated with the program and, if necessary, take the animal to the veterinarian's clinic for follow-up care. Amigos pays for the post-operative care if it is provided by one of our private veterinarians.

Paying for the campaigns

The sterilizations at the campaigns are provided free of charge. The average cost of a campaign sterilization is currently 69 pesos (US \$5.31). It is low because the Secretariat of Health pays its veterinarians' salaries when they work on weekdays. During our Sunday campaigns, which are held three times a year, both the Secretariat vets and the private vets who participate volunteer their services. For their support we are very grateful.

Amigos pays for the equipment and most of the supplies used in the campaigns; the Urban Health Center contributes some of the supplies. Medical supplies, especially the prescription drugs, are costly. Thus far this year we have spent 47,423 pesos (US \$3,648) on campaigns (not counting donated materials). For that reason, we ask that those who can afford to make a donation do so to help defray our expenses.

How similar are humans to other animals?

By Bruce Max Feldmann, DVM

What can science tell us about the similarities between humans and other animals that inform us as to how we should treat other species? Is there scientific evidence suggesting that other animals, such as dogs, cats, and horses, deserve consideration—even rights—similar to those we humans accord to ourselves?

Sentience is the capacity for feelings and emotions. Self-awareness is awareness of one's individuality. Self-consciousness is consciousness of one's own acts or states as belonging to or originating in oneself. Science has established that human sentience, self-awareness, and self-consciousness reside in our brain. Common sense tells us the same thing.

Let me be more specific. Where in the brain does the scientific evidence tell us that those three capabilities reside? They reside in the cerebrum and in several associated structures called the limbic system. These structures are located in the front part of the brain, right behind the forehead and eyes.

Which animals have a cerebrum and a limbic system? Well, all the "higher" animals do—including all mammals, birds, and fish. (With fish, things get a little murky, because fish have a quite primitive brain.)



A dog and her human companion share a happy moment.

On the basis of anatomical evidence, it seems likely that all animals—from fish to birds and

mammals—are apt to have a capacity for sentience, self-awareness, and self-consciousness. These animals are thus likely to experience sensations and emotions such as pleasure, suffering, and distress.

Our cerebrum and limbic system evolved over eons. Somewhere along the way, these brain parts came to have the capacities that, as we know from the scientific evidence and our own life experiences, exist in humans and other hominids. We don't know yet precisely at what level of evolution these capacities first appeared in animals. It is possible that they are present in even the most primitive brains of fish. So if one wants to try to live a moral life, what is one to do with regard to these other animals?

I suggest that we ought to give the benefit of the doubt to all animals that have a cerebrum and a limbic system, because they all may have the capacity to suffer and feel distress. In other words, kindness and compassion are called for. This view raises questions about the morality of what we eat, what we do in animal research, what we condone regarding our use of animals in spectator sports, and how we raise and keep our domestic animals, from chickens to dogs.

Our companion animals—our dogs and cats—are programmed to thrive on human contact. To deny them that interaction is to deny them an essential biological need. Sharing our lives with our animal companions is important to them. Socially isolating a dog on a roof or chaining a dog in one's yard causes suffering and distress to that dog. Evolution and morality demand that we maintain a relationship with our companion animals that fosters their well-being. Maximizing their well-being fosters our own.

To deny our companion animals human contact is to deny them an essential biological need.

The English philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) summarized it well: The question is, not can they think; the question is, can they suffer?

Dr. Feldmann, now retired, was formerly on the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, and the University of California, Berkeley, and was in private companion-animal practice for 19 years. He lives part-time in Guanajuato.

The leash dilemma

By Kathleen Fitzpatrick

Does your dog pull on its leash, stop and sniff at every interesting object, and constantly pull you sideways or backwards when all you want to do is walk forward on your human path at a leisurely pace?



Relax! That means your dog is an absolutely normal dog. Leash-walking contradicts every normal response your dog has to its environment. Healthy and happy dogs need the stimulus of sniffing and exploring the world around them. They naturally move much faster than humans. And they never move in a straight line! Worst of all, leashes make even good-natured dogs prone to aggression toward other dogs and humans.

Leash-walking contradicts every normal response your dog has to its environment. Healthy and happy dogs need to sniff and explore the world around them.

But leash-walking is the only option most of us have to perform that all-important function of exercising our dog. So how can we resolve this dilemma?

Our favorite TV dog-whisperer star would have us believe that training a dog to leash-walk is the most elemental trick in the book. Well, DON'T BELIEVE EVERYTHING YOU SEE ON TV! Leash manners are one of the hardest skills for any dog to learn, even with a professional trainer. And we know that none of us are professional trainers!

Look, just get over it. Your dog is never going to learn to heel and walk sedately by your side unless you spend months and months of daily training hours and continually refresh this intensive training. Between you and me, we know that most of us don't have that kind of time, skill, or patience.

So let your dog be a dog. Let him sniff bushes and buildings. And if she is aggressive to other dogs while on a leash, walk her late at night or early in the morning. Cross the street if you see another dog approaching. Buy a gentle leader harness or another type of harness that prevents your dog from pulling on the leash. There are many styles available, and they do work wonders.

My last article touched on the problem of escalating anger when you punish your dog for being a dog. Do not give in to the temptation of yanking on your dog's leash in order to stop him from pulling. This never works and is extremely dangerous for your dog's vulnerable trachea and cervical spine.

Would a two-year-old child understand what you wanted if you put a collar around her neck and yanked every time she wanted to explore something interesting? No. All she would understand is that the person she loves is cruel and unreasonable and not to be trusted.

The biggest problem you will have when you start to yank on the leash is that you will become angrier and angrier and out of control. No dog will listen to or respect a human who has lost control of himself.

So relax and learn to sniff the roses along with your dog. Let your dog be a dog when he's on a leash. You will have more fun on your walks, and so will he!

Kathleen Fitzpatrick, a resident of Portland, Oregon, adopted Rosa, a dog she rescued while visiting Guanajuato in 2011. Her first article, on training dogs the modern way, appeared in our Newsletter 34 in August 2013. In this article Kathy shares more of her wisdom about dog training.

Our Summer Evening fundraiser was great fun

The fundraising party on Saturday evening, August 16, which took place at Gilberto Salazar's spacious and architecturally dramatic Hatha Yoga Studio, drew a crowd of about 50 people. Amigos board members and friends provided delicious *botanas* for the guests. Wine, beer, and soft drinks were plentiful. Geoff Brown entertained us with folk music and songs from the 60s on his banjo and guitar, prompting a few people to get out on the dance floor. Geoff and his wife, Sue Parry, both from England, have recently settled in Guanajuato and of course have adopted a homeless dog, Panda.



Geoff Brown singing and playing the banjo



Joan Hicks Romero, Tres Miller, and Margo Buschek



Host Gilberto Salazar



Maricela Guzmán, Rebeca Flores, and Lala Cortés

Adding visual interest to the party was an exhibition of photographs taken at various Amigos sterilization campaigns and public-education events. Best of all, the party raised 8,550 pesos (approximately 655 dollars) to help us continue our work. Our sincere thanks to everyone who helped make the fundraiser a success and such fun.

Amigos's new bus messages and logotype

If you live in Guanajuato, you will likely have seen at least one of our new bus messages, which began appearing on the backs of three city buses and inside numerous buses this month. The messages promote respect and compassion toward companion animals and emphasize the value such animals have in our lives. And like the masthead on page 1 of this Newsletter, the messages display our new logotype for Amigos.



This bus message urges readers to “Be responsible. Never abandon your pet, nor “give” it to the pound or any other place”



Respetar los derechos de animales es bueno no sólo para ellos.

Te sentirás orgulloso también.



This bus message states: “Respecting the rights of animals is good not only for them. You will feel proud too.”

The logotype is the result of a joint effort that began last winter at the University of Guanajuato. Professor Juan Carlos Saldaña Hernández, in the

Department of Design, approached us with a proposal to assign to his senior-year students the creation of a “corporate image” for Amigos. For some time we had wanted to include a symbol with our logotype in our printed materials but had never found the opportunity to make this a priority. Professor Saldaña set his students to the task by organizing a competition among them. Members of the Amigos board were asked to judge the results.

As you might expect, what seemed to be a perfectly simple decision proved to be more complicated, as our judges liked different elements of several of the designs. In the end we chose the paw print developed by Alejandra Ortega Chagoyan for our logo and the treatment of our name developed by Kenia Michelle Garcia Mejia for our new logotype. Then it was necessary to combine the two elements in ways that harmonized them and could be adapted to a variety of applications. As the students had just completed their senior year and were leaving the university, we could not ask them to do this. Anne-Marie Napoli, a former board member who has a talent for graphic design, agreed to accept this assignment. She arranged the two elements in several ways to produce a logotype that would be recognizable as ours even if those elements changed their respective positions.

We are truly grateful to Professor Saldaña for his inspiration to involve his students in this project and to Anne-Marie for combining the two winning designs. We are especially grateful to the students of the Design Faculty for producing such attractive and creative designs for us to choose from.



University art students display their logotypes

Recent memberships, donations, and support

We depend upon the donations we receive to provide services to the community. The average cost of a clinic sterilization is 300 pesos (US \$24), a typical rescue costs 600 pesos (US \$47), and a bus ad costs 1,000 pesos (US \$77) per month. Rates for annual memberships are (in US dollars): Individual, \$25; Family, \$40; Benefactor, \$100; Best Friend, \$500 or more.

Para hacerte miembro de "Amigos o hacer un donativo en cualquiera cantidad por PayPal, haz un click, [here](#).

We sincerely thank the following donors and volunteers for their recent support:

Benefactors: Mariana Gómez Grobet, Saul Helfenbein

In-kind donors: Jürgen and Margo Buschek, Centro de Salud Urbano, Suzy Cisneros's family, Nancy Cortés, Renee Davies, Todd and April Fell, Katya Ford, Carolyn Kenyon, Lulu Mendoza y Sinai Olmos, Joan Hicks Romero, Charles Huckabee and Terri Rasmussen, Ron Mann and Sandra Ward, Teresa and Duke Miller, Maritza Nasser, Araceli and Adriana Pérez, Anabel Rodríguez, Tom Reavley and Guille Amézquita, Gilberto Salazar, State of Guanajuato Institute of Public Health, Juan Jesús Vargas

Animal fosterers: Marlene Davis, Vero Mares, Vicky Moore

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We also thank those who bought tickets to our August fundraising party.

**AMIGOS DE LOS ANIMALES
de Guanajuato, A.C.**

www.amigosanimalesgto.org

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To make a donation through PayPal:

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Website for adoptions:

www.adoptaguanajuato.weebly.com

[Facebook site for reporting lost pets](#)

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